



United States Bankruptcy Court

Central District of California
Roybal Federal Building & Courthouse
255 East Temple Street, Suite 1534
Los Angeles, California 90012

PETER H. CARROLL
Chief Bankruptcy Judge

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December 1, 2011

An Open Letter to the Bankruptcy Bar

The Bankruptcy Judges of the Central District of California once again urge you to consider volunteering for one of the bankruptcy *pro bono* opportunities available in your area. Over the past three years, the number of low-income self-represented individuals in our court has risen dramatically. As you might imagine, the organizations currently assisting low-income people in bankruptcy are seeing hundreds of families on the brink of foreclosure or in other economic distress.

Volunteer opportunities range from just a few hours every other month at a clinic to full representation in a Chapter 7 case or adversary proceeding. With a self help desk now in every division, you can easily volunteer close to home for only the number of hours that fit into your schedule. Consumer bankruptcy training can often be provided where necessary. While most requests are for debtor assistance, low-income creditor assistance is also needed. The programs are structured so that traditionally creditor or business attorneys may volunteer without a concern about conflicts or being designated a debt relief agency. The vast majority of the people coming to these programs cannot afford counsel, but attorney referrals are also made through these organizations where appropriate.

Even a brief consultation with an attorney can make a big difference to an unrepresented party. Attorney assistance also greatly helps the court and other litigants. You can find the contact information for the group in your area along with the types of opportunities available on the Court's website in the "Information" tab under the "Self Service Center" in the "Court Sponsored Programs" section. We encourage you to contact one of these groups and see if there might be a way to contribute your expertise in these difficult economic times. To those of you who already volunteer or provide badly needed *pro bono* help in other ways, we say **thank you**. Your efforts help the court be more responsive to all litigants, regardless of income level.

Peter H. Carroll
Chief Bankruptcy Judge

PRO BONO ORGANIZATIONS SEEKING BANKRUPTCY VOLUNTEERS:*

Organization: Public Counsel

Area served: Los Angeles County

Go to www.Publiccounsel.org and click on the "Volunteer" tab OR

Contact David Daniels, Pro Bono Director

Phone: (213) 385-2977

Volunteers Needed for:

Self Help Desk – Mondays and Wednesdays 10 am – 12 pm and 2 pm – 4 pm

Reaffirmation Clinics, Chapter 7 Seminars, preparing Ch.7 bankruptcy petitions

Organization: Bet Tzedek

Area served: Los Angeles County

Contact: Jenny Williams, Pro Bono & Volunteer Coordinator

Phone: (323) 549-5895

jwilliams@bettzedek.org

Volunteers Needed for:

Client intake interviews and follow-up; preparing Ch. 7 bankruptcy petitions

Organization: Neighborhood Legal Services

Area served: Northern Los Angeles County

Contact: volunteers@nls-la.org

Volunteers Needed for:

Self Help Desk in Woodland Hills:

Mondays and Thursdays 9 am – 12 pm and 1 – 4 pm

Organization: Public Service Law Corporation

Area served: Riverside and San Bernardino Counties

Contact: Katherine Hardy, katherinehardy@verizon.net

OR publaw@sbcglobal.net

Phone: (951) 682-7968

Volunteers Needed for: non-dischargeability cases;

Self Help Desk – Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 am – 2 pm

Organization: Public Law Center

Area served: Orange County

Contact: 714-541-1010 or www.publiclawcenter.org

Volunteers Needed for:

Prefiling Chapter 7 Clinic; Post Filing Chapter 7 Clinic

Reaffirmation Clinic in Santa Ana, Ch. 7 representation

Organization: Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County

Area served: Santa Barbara County

Contact: jobs@lafsb.org

Volunteers Needed for:

Ch. 7 representation and Self Help Clinic – Weekly on Fridays 10 am – 12 pm

* Updated 1/26/2012